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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/770,654	02/03/2004	Uwe Heinelt	DEAV2003/0007 US NP	1658
5487	7590	02/01/2007	EXAMINER	
ROSS J. OEHLER			STOCKTON, LAURA LYNNE	
SANOFI-AVENTIS U.S. LLC				
1041 ROUTE 202-206			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
MAIL CODE: D303A				
BRIDGEWATER, NJ 08807			1626	
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE	
3 MONTHS	02/01/2007		PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/770,654	HEINELT ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Laura L. Stockton, Ph.D.	1626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 January 2007.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4-11 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3, 12 and 13 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/22/2004.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

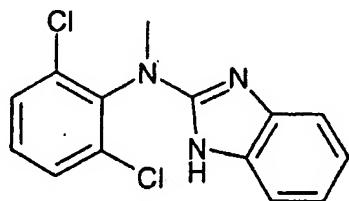
Claims 1-13 are pending in the application.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of Group I (claims 1-3, 12 and 13), and the species of Example 2 found on page 16 of the instant specification (reproduced below), in the reply filed on January 5, 2007 is acknowledged.

Example 2

(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)(2,6-dichlorophenyl)methylamine hydrochloride



The traversal is on the ground(s) that: (1) there is no undue burden on the Examiner to search for all of the claims as they are believed to be in same or similar

classification; and (2) the product and methods of using the product should be rejoined pursuant to MPEP 821.04. This is not found persuasive because separate search considerations are involved for each of the outlined groups. Also note that the two inventions have different classifications. Therefore, it would impose an undue burden on the Examiner and the Patent Office's resources if the instant application were unrestricted.

Further, in accordance with M.P.E.P. §821.04 and In re Ochiai, 71 F.3d 1565, 37 USPQ 1127 (Fed. Cir. 1995), rejoinder of product claims with process claims commensurate in scope with the allowed product claims will occur following a finding that the product claims are allowable. Until, such time, a restriction between product claims and process claims is deemed proper. Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, Applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended

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during prosecution to maintain either dependency on the product claims or to otherwise include the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.**

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claims 4-11 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on January 5, 2007.

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Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner has considered the Information Disclosure Statement filed on November 22, 2004.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to

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particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 3, an "or" is needed before the last compound listed in the claim.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the

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conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-3, 12 and 13 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3, 8, 15 and 16 of copending Application No. 10/771,185.

Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the instant claimed invention is generically described in copending Application No. 10/771,185.

The indiscriminate selection of "some" among "many" is *prima facie* obvious, In re Lemin, 141 USPQ 814 (1964). The motivation to make the claimed compounds derives from the expectation that structurally similar compounds would possess similar activity (e.g., treating snoring).

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One skilled in the art would thus be motivated to prepare products embraced by the prior art to arrive at the instant claimed products with the expectation of obtaining additional beneficial products which would be useful in treating, for example, snoring. The instant claimed invention would have been suggested to one skilled in the art and therefore, the instant claimed invention would have been obvious to one skilled in the art.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishi et al. (JP 02-306916) and Hofmeister et al. {WO 2002/46169}, each taken alone or in combination with each other. Since the WO is in a non-English language, the U.S. equivalent, U.S. Patent 6,686,384, will be referred to hereinafter.

Determination of the scope and content of the prior art (MPEP §2141.01)

Applicant claims benzimidazole compounds. Nishi et al. {see supplied English abstracts; page 101 (or page 1); and especially Compound 23 on page 140 (or page

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40) } and Hofmeister et al. {columns 1-4 and 9-12; and especially Compound 1 in column 7, line 36} each teach benzimidazole compounds which are structurally similar to the instant claimed compounds.

Ascertainment of the difference between the prior art and the claims

(MPEP §2141.02)

The difference between the compounds of Nishi et al. and the compounds instantly claimed is that the instant claimed compounds are generically described in Nishi et al.

The difference between the compounds of Hofmeister et al. and the compounds instantly claimed is that of a secondary amine in Hofmeister et al. versus a tertiary amine as instantly claimed {i.e., -NH- in Hofmeister et al. verus -NR5- wherein R5 is alkyl as instantly claimed}.

Finding of prima facie obviousness--rational and motivation (MPEP

§2142-2413)

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The indiscriminate selection of "some" among "many" is *prima facie* obvious, In re Lemin, 141 USPQ 814 (1964).

Additionally, it is sufficient if a reference compound is so closely related to claimed compound that a chemist would find the difference an obvious variation; thus, claims are refused where the difference is primarily the one which exists between a secondary and a tertiary amine. Ex parte Bluestone, 135 USPQ 199 (1961).

The motivation to make the claimed compounds derives from the expectation that structurally similar compounds would possess similar activity (e.g., treating ischemic cardiopathy).

One skilled in the art would thus be motivated to prepare products embraced by Nishi et al., or alternatively, a tertiary amine compound of the secondary amine compounds taught by Hofmeister et al., to arrive at the instant claimed products with the

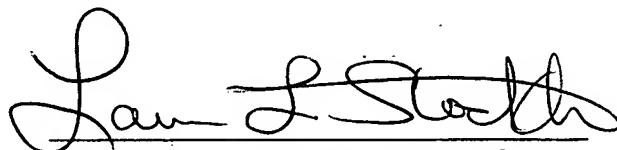
expectation of obtaining additional beneficial products which would be useful in treating, for example, ischemic cardiopathy. Since each of Nishi et al. and Hofmeister et al. teach benzimidazole compounds that are structurally similar to each other and are useful in treating some of the same diseases/disorders, the combination of Nishi et al. and Hofmeister et al. would also teach the instant claimed invention. The instant claimed invention would have been suggested to one skilled in the art and therefore, the instant claimed invention would have been obvious to one skilled in the art.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Laura L. Stockton whose telephone number is (571) 272-0710. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 6:15 am to 2:45 pm. If the examiner is out of the Office, the examiner's supervisor, Joseph McKane, can be reached on (571) 272-0699.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

The Official fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.



Laura L. Stockton, Ph.D.
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1626, Group 1620
Technology Center 1600

January 29, 2007